

The Builder.

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WONDERFUL LONDON!

"London;—opulent, enlarged, and still increasing London! Babylon of old, nor more the glory of the earth than she, a more accomplished world's chief glory now." "If you wish," said Johnson, "to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings; but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists." And Byron has the same idea of it when he says—

"The man who has stood on the Acropolis, And look'd down over Attica; or he Who has sail'd where picturesque Constantinople is, Or seen Timbuctoo, or hath taken tea In small-eyed China's crockery-ware metropolis, Or sat amidst the bricks of Nineveh, May not think much of London's first appearance!"

But ask him what he thinks of it a year hence?"

That he may answer with truth, however, even then, he must have looked a little beyond the surface, and have seen, as well as the town, the vast and complicated operations going on in its trade and commerce, administration of justice, monetary system, legislature, machinery, traffic, markets, clubs, places of worship and amusement, scientific and literary associations, the habits and manners of the people. Its old streets are all histories:—

"The stones have voices; and the walls do live;" and its new squares are most eloquent utterances of the present time, to those whose eyes and ears are open. Far outstretching on every side, long strings of residences tie it to the adjacent country, and render its limits indefinable. The Thames links the world to it: its institutions have made it the focus of civilization; ability from whatever clime there will have reward, and deposed kings, exiled ministers, and flying "red republicans" find refuge side by side,—

"Where London streets ferment in full activity,"— secure so long as they respect the laws. A year may give a good notion of London, but to know it requires much more time than this.

Even those who have lived in it all their lives, if they will glance through Mr. Cunningham's "Hand-Book," just now published,* and which being before us has led to the foregoing observations, will see how much there is in London of which they know nothing, and how full of interest and wisdom are scores of places that they have passed listlessly scores of times. To those who see rightly, London is much fuller than it is to the unknowing, who see only with the eye.

Horace Walpole has this memorandum,— "There is a French book, called 'Anecdotes des Rues de Paris.' I had begun a similar work, 'Anecdotes of the Streets of London.' I intended, in imitation of the French origi-

nal, to have pointed out the streets and houses where any remarkable incident had happened; but I found the labour would be too great, in collecting materials from various streets, and I abandoned the design, after having written about ten or twelve pages." Some years ago, we fell upon the notion ourselves, as probably many others have done, before meeting with it in "Walpoliana," and began "Stories of the Streets."* but the intention went to pave a nameless place. Mr. Crofton Croker, in a series of most interesting dissertations, printed in "Fraser's Magazine," two or three years since, under the title of "A Walk from Hyde-park Corner to Fulham," showed to what an extent the idea might be carried out by intelligence and industry. And now, in the volumes before us, Mr. Cunningham has made Walpole's remark the motto on his title-page, and has, to a considerable extent, but necessarily in a terse and condensed form, acted upon it in this "Handbook;" and he has brought to bear upon it an immense amount of reading, especially of the poets and essayists of the two last centuries, showing industry and powers of research in the examination of parish papers and other MSS., and discrimination and skill in the use made of the matter collected. The book is in the dictionary form, similar in that respect to Elmes's "Topographical Dictionary of London;" it contains a great deal of new matter, and must have cost its author much pains and labour during the seven years it has been in hand.

Mr. Cunningham commences his work with an interesting "Chronology of London Occurrences," brought up to the present time; and from this, without stopping to check the dates, we have selected some of the events relating to buildings:—

- 886—London repaired or rebuilt by Alfred the Great.
- 1078-81—White Tower, in the Tower of London, built by Gundulph, bishop of Rochester.
- 1083—Old St. Paul's (the church described by Dugdale) began to be built.
- 1097—Westminster Hall built by William Rufus; part of this building still remains.
- 1133—St. Bartholomew's Church founded by Rahere.
- 1176—London-bridge "began to be founded."
- 1185—Temple Church, dedicated by Heraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem. The inscription, recording the circumstance was destroyed in 1695.
- 1189—In this year it was directed that all houses should be built of stone up to a certain height, and covered with slate or baked tile.
- 1208—The church of St. Mary Overy in Southwark "begonne."
- 1221—The foundation-stone of the Lady Chapel in Westminster Abbey laid by Henry III.
- 1222—St. Paul's steeple built and finished.
- 1245—Henry III. ordered the east end, the tower, and the transepts of Westminster Abbey Church, to be taken down and rebuilt on a larger scale, and in a more elegant form, at his 'own expense.'
- 1245—Savoy Palace built.
- 1285—The great conduit in West Cheap commenced building; this was the first ciestern of lead castellated with stone erected in London; the water was conveyed by leaden pipes from Tyburn.
- 1290—Stone cross in Cheapside erected by Edward I. to Queen Eleanor.
- 1397—Westminster Hall repaired by Richard II.; the walls were carried up 2 feet higher; the windows altered; a stately front and a new roof constructed, according to the design of Master Henry Zeeley.
- 1431—Fleet-bridge repaired or rebuilt; this was the bridge standing in Stow's time.
- 1503-4, Jan. 24—First stone of Henry VII.'s Chapel laid.
- 1505—Henry VII. rebuilds the Savoy, as an hospital of St. John the Baptist, for the relief of a hundred poor people; Stow says about 1509, but Weaver tells us that the date 1505 was over the gate.
- 1518—Lincoln's-inn Gate, Chancery-lane, erected.
- 1540-41—High Holborn paved.

1548-49—Old Somerset House commenced building.

1552—May, Covent Garden and Seven Acres, called Long-acre, granted to John, Earl of Bedford, Lord Privy Seal.

1561—June 4, the steeple and roof of old St. Paul's consumed by lightning.

1566—June 7, the first stone of the Royal Exchange laid.

1571—Whitechapel first paved.

1572—Middle Temple Hall built.

1590—July 7, the Queen's proclamation dated, prohibiting the erection, within three miles of the city gates, of any new houses or tenements "where no former house hath been known to have been."

1582—Thames water first conveyed into men's houses by pipes of lead from an engine near London-bridge, made by Peter Morris, a Dutchman; this engine supplied the Standard in Cornhill, which was first erected this year.

1586—Ludgate rebuilt, and the statue of Queen Elizabeth, now at St. Dunstan's, set up.

1594—An engine erected by an Englishman (Bevis Bulmer) to convey Thames water into West-chapel and Fleet-street.

1603—Sept. 16, Proclamation issued by King James against inmates and multitudes of dwellers in streets, rooms, and places, in and about the City of London.

1606-7—Moorfilds drained.

1608—June 10, first stone of the New Exchange in the Strand laid.

1609—April 11, New Exchange in the Strand opened.

1617—July 7, Church of St. John's, Wapping, consecrated by King, bishop of London.

1618-19—Jan. 12 (Tuesday), the old Banqueting House at Whitehall burnt down (*Howes*, p. 1031).

1619—June 1, Inigo Jones's banqueting-house, at Whitehall, commenced building.

1620—Sept. 20, New River finished by Sir Hugh Myddelton.

1630—July 24, proclamation dated "concerning new buildings in and about the Cittie of London, and against the dividing of houses into several dwellings, and harbouring inmates: forbidding the erection of any building upon a new foundation, within the limits of three miles from any of the gates of the city of London or Palace of Westminster."

1632—Sept. 14, first stone of the chapel at Somerset House laid by Henrietta Maria (*Ellis's Letters*, III., 271, 2nd series).

1633—Church of St. Paul, Covent Garden, built; it was not consecrated till 1638, owing to a dispute between the Earl of Bedford, at whose expense it was built, and the vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, who claimed the right of consecration.

1633—Inigo Jones's classic portico to Old St. Paul's commenced.

1635—Lincoln's-Inn Fields laid out according to the plan of Inigo Jones.

1638—Sept. 27, Church of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, consecrated.

1643—London fortified: Mount-street, Grosvenor-square, derives its name from one of the fortifications.

1652—July 21, Inigo Jones died.

1657—June 20, "Much debate was upon the Bill for restraint of new buildings in and about London" (*White Locke*, p. 661).

1657—Portugal-row, Lincoln's Inn-fields, erected.

1662—July 17, supervisors appointed by the Commons for repairing the highways and sewers.

1662—Nov. 15, Hugh Audley, "the rich Audley," died; North and South Audley-streets were called after him.

1666—Sept. 13, proclamation dated for the rebuilding the city.

1667—May 8, Order in Council for rebuilding the City dated.

1667—Oct. 23, first stone of the second Royal Exchange laid.

1667—The Rebuilding Act passed (19 Car. II., c. 3); a monument to be erected in memory of the fire, near the place where it broke out (*see*, 29).

1670—An additional Act for the rebuilding of the City passed (22 Car. II., c. 11). Water from the tops of houses to be conveyed down the sides of houses by pipes.

1670—Temple Bar built.

1671—The Monument commenced building.

1671—Bow Church commenced building.

1674—Charles I.'s statue at Charing Cross erected.

1675—June 21, first stone of St. Paul's laid; warrant to commence dated May 1st, 1675.

1678—Parish of St. Ann, Westminster, made.

1680—St. Bride's Church, Fleet-street, built.

1682—March, Charles II. laid the first stone of Chelsea Hospital.

1682—First fire insurance established; the Phoenix, at the Rainbow Coffee-house, in Fleet-street.

1684—July 23, St. James's Church, Piccadilly, consecrated.

1684—Dover-street built.

1686—March 21, Church of St. Ann, Soho, consecrated by Compton, bishop of London.

* A Hand Book for London, past and present. By Peter Cunningham. 3 vols. London, 1849. John Murray.

* Under this name title, if we remember rightly, Mr. Leigh Hunt wrote some papers not long ago.